

The Blessedness of Good Men-after Death.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at the

F U N E R A L

O F T H E

Rev^d. Mr. *Henry Cornish*, B. D.

Who died on *Sunday, Decemb. 18th*, in the Eighty Ninth
Year of his Age, and was Interred on *Thursday, Decemb.*
22d, 1698. in the Church of *Bisiter*, in the County of
Oxford.

With a Preface to Rectifie some Misrepresentations, &c.
in a late Pamphlet, Entitled, *Some Remarks on the Life,*
Death and Burial of the said Mr. Cornish.

By John Ollyffe, *Rector of Dunton, in the*
County of Bucks.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Jonathan Robinson*, at the *Golden-Lion* in *St. Paul's*
Church-Yard, 1699.

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S E R M O N

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By John Olcott, Pastor of ...

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THE PREFACE.

I Had not the least Intent, when I first Compos'd, and afterwards Preach'd this Sermon, to make it Publick. But there being a very busy and angry Reflector, who it seems was then an Auditor, who hath concern'd himself to Print Remarks upon it in a very little time after it was Preach'd, which I cannot but take for very disingenious and hard Usage; and not knowing what may be the Consequence thereof, among those who may frame their Judgments only by this Report, and may be apt to kindle at his Fire: I think my self oblig'd for my own Vindication, as also to satisfy the Desires of some, whom I have a Respect for, at length to send it abroad, and to take some little Notice of his Reflections upon it. And I am not without hope, but that by the Blessing of God it may be of use to some devout Minds at least, howsoever He, or some Others took it.

This Reflector saith, He is really as much against a Persecuting Spirit, as any of those Men, whose Interest or Coldness it is to be, for what they call Moderation. He knoweth himself best. Far be it therefore from me to charge him with that, which he denieth of himself. But it seems, tho' he be against Persecution, yet he is not for Moderation: For this he reckons to be from Coldness or Interest, which are too low Principles for him to be influenci'd by. And so one would think by him. Now I must own to this Reflector, and to all the World, that I am not only against a Persecuting Spirit, and so have always been, but am for Moderation too; yet not from Interest or Coldness, but because I think it is a very great Christian Vertue. And I believe, if the Reflector had something less of a Persecuting Spirit, and a little of Moderation, it would be never the worse; and then I am apt to think, he had spared these Reflections.

He saith, He is as much by Temper and by Conscience against Railing and Rudeness, as against Fawning and Flattery. 'Tis

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great pity, that a good Temper should ever be spoiled by bad Customs; or that Passion or Heat should ever over-rule such a Principle, as Conscience. But yet, so we see it comes to pass sometimes. He would have all Justice and Charity, he saith, shewed to the Dead of all Perswasions. And I perceive, he is willing enough, that Dissenters should have as much Respect shewn them that way, as other Men of the most desperate Sects and Factions, as Pharisees, or as the most deplorable Hereticks in the Christian Church. Because there may be some laudable Qualities even in such Men; and they are not so lost to God and Goodness, but they say and do some things that are Praise-worthy, and of good Report, which is a very notable Concession, and which the Dissenters no doubt will Con him much Thanks for, that they may be treated at least as well as Turks, Infidels, Pharisees and Hereticks.

He is not angry, he saith, That this Grave Ancient Man was publickly treated with so much Respect and Honour; and how comes it to pass then, that he is so angry with me for treating him with this Respect and Honour which I have done? Especially when he grants, that Funeral Sermons should be interpreted with Candour and Concession.

But it raised his Indignation, he saith, to hear such an Harangue upon a profess'd maintainer of Division and Schism. What that Harangue was, is to be seen in the Sermon, towards the latter End, which is there without the least omission or alteration of any one Word, that I know of; which, if he had consider'd better, and had not done in haste what he did, he might have thought, that there had been no such occasion given for this loud Out-cry, which he hath made in this Business.

As to much of what I have mention'd in the Character of this Worthy Person, this Reflector hath said as much as I, and somewhat more, as I shall give an account afterwards, being better acquainted with some Passages of his Life of late, than I was: and if it be more to the purpose too, I am very glad of it, and thank him for it. But for those Strokes of his Life and Conversation, which, he saith, some People had objected, as Blots and Blemishes to him, and which I should have made an Ingenious Apology for, I knew none there, that had made such Objections, or that expected such Apologies. And I did not in the least design then, that my Sermon should have gone farther. The Reflector now being well acquainted with Panegyrick, hath shewed me,
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what he thinks I might have said both ways; but hath inserted or added withal very slighting and undervaluing Reflections, which I, who have less Skill that way, cannot but think he ought to have let alone; and no doubt he had done so, if he had designed his Remarks in real kindness to his Memory. But I for my part did not think, I had need to concern my self with any thing of that Nature; but must be of Opinion still after all, that he hath said, That it would have been plainly absurd in the present Audience, and that much also of what he has said, hath neither relish of Decency nor good Nature in it; and therefore I chose rather to express in few Words what I knew in the time of my Acquaintance with him, and to omit all other Things which did not concern me: For it was not my Business to give an History of his Life, nor indeed could I do it, being but little acquainted with it, but only in short to express his Character, as far as I knew. And if I did deliver this with as much noise and assurance, as Lungs and Liberty could take, which He being an Auditor, saith, I did; I hope it may well be ascribed to my Affection and Sense of Obligations, which this Reflector grants in Funeral Orations there should be an Allowance for. But that I spake it in Triumph over the Head of the Parochial Minister, as this Reflector also by a most uncharitable Censure layeth to my Charge, I abhor and detest it with as much Indignation, as he saith, he heard it. Far be it from me ever to have had such an Intent or Thought, which I am sure never was in my Heart; nor could there be the least colour for such a Censure, but my Affectionate Delivery, which the Occasion drew from me.

But the great Quarrel against me, I perceive is, That I commended him so much for his Piety and Holiness, which this Reflector calls Sainting of him as it were; and that I pronounced him Blessed, that is, I expressed my Belief of the Blessedness of the Man, Who, this Reflector saith, had been the Voice and the Soul of the Schism in that Town; that is, had been a Preacher to a separate Congregation there. In which Station of his yet, it appeareth by what this Reflector himself afterwards saith of him, He managed himself with very great Modesty and Inoffensiveness. And this Reflector himself also pronounceth him an Honest Man; that being the Appellation which he giveth him. And if he was such an One, then whatsoever his Failures or Mistakes had been in some Points, either of Opinion or Practice; and suppose this for One, which this Reflector mentions, yet he must needs believe, that

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that these Failures and Mistakes were Unwilling and Involuntary in him. And sure He cannot but hold, but that a very eminent degree of Piety may be very well consistent with more than one involuntary Failures and Mistakes. And a Man may be a very Good Man, tho' in some Things He be in the wrong. And if I believed him Pious, as I verily did, I can see no Reason, but that I might at that time openly express my Belief thereof. And then sure I ought to believe him Blessed too, if I ought to believe Pious Men to be Blessed. And then why might not I express my Belief thereof likewise?

But, he saith, I should have considered the Place, wherein I stood upon Courtesy and Sufferance, and should in good Manners have said nothing offensive to the Person, by whose Leave I came there; I verily thought, I had done so, as he saith, I should have done. I commended him for his Goodness, Humility and Piety; and I think, he deserved it. And I could never imagine, That the Commendation of the Piety of any Man, who did deserve that Commendation, could be offensive to him, or any other worthy Person.

But it seems I spoke, as if I had his Person in Admiration, and taught those present to have it so. And what then? It was for that, which was Good and Excellent in him; and what harm could there be in that? That sure could never, as this Reflector adds, seal up the Obstinate, or confirm them in the Error of their Ways, when I did not commend him for any Error, but for that which was Good in him. Nor can it be a delivering up of the Church, which I hope is as much for Holiness in all Men, as I, or any other Person can be. Nor can the Commendation of a Person's Piety and Goodness, tho' in some Things differing from me, and from the Church of which I am a Member, be so countenance Disorders and Divisions, to daub with untempered Mortar, or to prophesie Deceits, all which are the judicious and kind Remarks, which this Reflector makes upon my Performance. What! Cannot a Man commend a Dissenter, but that must he so commend his Dissent? And if I did not commend his Dissent, how was that to countenance Divisions? And if I commended him for that Good, which was really in Him, I spoke the Truth, however this Reflector would insinuate the contrary, and if a Man speaks Truth, is that to Prophesie Deceits? I am no Dissenter, but I love and honour Dissenters that are good Men, for their Goodness sake, tho' not for their Dissent; and so I ought to do. To speak plainly,

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I believe the Constitution of our Church to be Justifiable, and in the main Primitive, and the Terms of our Church Communion to be Lawful; or else I should lie to God and Men in what I have done in Conformity, which God forbid, or now must renounce it, which I see no Reason for. And therefore I know, I ought not to do any thing, that I think might tend to alienate or withdraw any Person from it; nor did I ever intend any such thing in the whole Course of my Life, but to sweeten Men's Spirits, and to reconcile them to it, as much I could. But I see many Persons have invincible Prejudices against some Things, which the Church of which I am, as well as my self, think Indifferent. And if this Reflector thinks, they cannot be Good Men because of such Prejudices, and certain Practices of theirs following thereupon, I am of another Opinion. For I believe, there have been, and are a great many such notwithstanding; and as such I am bound to Love and Honour them, and not only to exchange with them the common Offices of Humanity, which is all, that this Reflector seems to allow. Tho' 'tis their Goodness, and not their Prejudices or Dissent, that I Love and Honour in them. And on the other side, to speak as plainly, If any be Bad Men, let them be of the Church never so much; if they can pray and swear almost in a Breath; if they are drunk with Wine or strong Drink, tho' not with Opinions; if they hate Faction, and nothing else besides; if they have a Zeal for Forms and outward Observances, and there it rests, I shall never have much respect for such Puppies and Apes in Religion, that have nothing at all of the Life and Spirit of it.

I have indeed these Expressions in the Character of this Good Man, That his Labour in that way, wherein he thought he might Glorify God, even to extream Old Age (for now he was in the Eighty Ninth Year of it) was an Instance of his great delight therein, of his Pious Zeal for the promoting of Religion, and of his Earnest Desire of the Eternal Welfare of Men. I did not speak this to justify his Way in the Circumstances of it, but to commend his Holy Intention and Zeal for the promoting of Piety in it, which I thought his long-continued Labour was a great Indication of. For so I perswade my self, it was intended by him, and that the matter and end of his Service and Performances, allowing for Human Frailties, were for the glorifying of God, and promoting of true Religion, and not of Disorders and Divisions. For this Reflector himself observes enough to clear him in that Matter, if his Preaching was like the rest of his Conversation. For he himself

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himself observeth, That notwithstanding many Disadvantages of Education and Interest, which he lay under, that he was no Bigot, no violent angry Man, That he had really a Meekness of Disposition, which kept him from Wranglings and Disputes; That he had a goodness of Nature, which inclined him to a fair Correspondence with some Church Divines; and that it seemed his peculiar frame of Spirit, to be reserved and inoffensive. That like a Wise and Good Man he took only the defensive part in those short Discourses, that had been held with him; That he never in his hearing raised at, or run down the Constitution of the Church, but pleaded calmly for Moderation and Liberty of Conscience, and bearing with one another. And that he often chose to make as it were some Apology for keeping up a separate Meeting, in opposition to the Church, and would say, he was brought thither by the invitation and importunity of such, as were good people. And that it was not his Intention to keep them altogether from the Church, but should sometimes let them an Example of going thither himself. And that he did at first resolve to begin and end his Publick Exercises at such Hours, as should not interfere with the Solemn Service of the Church, but dismiss them from one place to attend at the other. And that he seemed to desire no better Character, than what had been freely given to his Predecessor Mr. Troughton (by one, who, as this Reflector saith, had not the Custom to flatter that Party) who was very moderate, &c. And that he seemed to value himself on this Happiness, that he had received Holy Orders from a Bishop of the Church of England. That he Married one of his Daughters to a Conforming Divine, and used his Interest to possess him of a better Benefice, under the Condition of Subscription and Declaration, which the Law required. Concerning which Relations, and others which he adds, I know nothing, except that barstey of the Marriage of his Daughter, and therefore could say nothing of them. But I think even from this Reflector's account of him, I have Reason also to conclude, That this Good Man's Pains and Zeal were intended by him, not for the promoting of Divisions and Disorders, but of the Service of God, and of true Piety and Holiness, which was what I aimed at, in that which I said of him in that part of his Character. Therefore to conclude this, I cannot yet be persuaded, that what I said of this Worthy Man, was downright Justice to his Memory, and not Flaming or Flattery, as this Reflector would insinuate.

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But there is another Thing it seems, that raised the Indignation of this Reflector, viz. That in all my Discourse there was not a word of Exhortation to Unity and Peace, nor so much as wishing those People to come more frequently to that Holy Place, where they were now Assembled, and where their Beloved Teacher chose to lie at Rest: That there was nothing, he saith, but an Applause of the Person, and then a silent Consent to the Merits of the Cause. And thereupon he insinuates, as if I made Conformity and Separation indifferent Things; as if I was an Advocate for Indifference in Communion; and had cowardly betrayed that Altar, to the Service whereof I had been legally Ordained. For my part, I cannot but wonder at this Reflector's Discourse, and by what Logick he could ever infer, That the Applause and Commendation of a Person for his Goodness, and Zeal for the promoting of Piety, which was all that I designed; and my omitting of that, which did not concern me at that time, could be a silent Consent to the Merits of a Cause; or that it was to be an Advocate for indifference in Communion, to say nothing at all about it. But a little Wit, and a great deal of ill Nature, by the help of spightful Innuendo's will be able to infer any thing from any thing. But I must tell this Reflector, That that was no part of my Business at that time, which he expected of me. My Business was to Preach a Funeral Sermon at the Interment of an Old and Good Friend, from whom I had received formerly many Obligations; to which I was called by the Friends of the Deceased, and for the doing of which they had obtained leave of the Minister of the Town. In this Sermon I did endeavour plainly and familiarly (which it seems was a Fault with some) to represent some Things, which might be for the Consolation of Good People against the fears of Death, and to exhort and encourage others to espouse Religion, which had so great Advantages attending upon it. And this I think, by this Reflector's leave, was a proper Subject for such an Occasion. And this Subject I having chosen, this I was to pursue. But yet could not omit saying something, tho' it was but a little (and I think, if I committed any Fault, it was in saying too little) out of Gratitude and hearty Respect to the Memory of my Reverend and good Friend Departed. But I could not think it any part of my Business upon that Occasion, to insist upon the Points of Unity and Schism. Let my Thoughts or Opinion about them have been what they would, or tho' they were never so much

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such as this Reflector would have them; therefore I think the Reflector blames me without Cause, as guilty of a grand Omission of that, which was nothing to the purpose of what I was then about; but it seems to me, would have been a downright Solecism at a Funeral Solemnity. And I have never observed, That Excursions of this Nature have ever had any good Effect, but directly the contrary.

Yet I can assure this Reflector, and do profess to him, That I have as much desired and longed for the Peace of the Church, its Security and Establishment, and the Union of Dissenters to it; that all our Animosities might be composed, our Breaches healed, and our Differences happily brought to an end, as ever any hungry Man did long for his Meat and Drink, and would be glad to promote it by all proper Means. I am sure it is for the interest of Religion, for the advancement of the Name and Honour of our great Lord and Master, to have the Church of God at Unity within it self. It is that, which would make the Church it self Glorious and Venerable, and formidable to all its Enemies; or rather, it will be the way to have no Enemies at all, when they shall see the happy Effects of the Christian Doctrine upon the Lives and Spirits of Men, and Love, Charity and good Will planted and fructifying in the Christian World. I am very sure from the Apostle, That the whole Body fitly joined together, and compacted by that, which every Joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the Measure of every part, maketh encrease of the Body, unto the edifying of it self in Love, Eph. 4. 16. And therefore all that could be done, should be done, towards the procuring of this mutual Love, and the settling of Concord among all the Members of this Body. All proper Means should be made use of, all Methods taken; any way, any expedient tried that can be; unnecessary occasions of Contention should be removed, Concessions made, and yielding on all sides; and if one Thing will not do then another, and another should be tried, like Physick in a difficult Case: And it would be all worth the while, for the promoting of Christian Love and Charity, which is so great a part of Religion, and which is so helpful to all the rest. And 'tis Religion, that we must aim at, and which all Things whatsoever should subserve to. Order, Government, Discipline, Ordinances, Ministers, and Ministry, are all but to promote Religion, Faith, Purity,

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Purity, and Charity among Men. And 'tis Pride, Interest, Passion, Stiffness, and Revenge, that spoil and binder all. But whosoever they are, that do not prefer Religion and Peace above every Thing else, all violent Incendiaries, all Self-seekers, all Carnal Politicians, that to gratifie an Humour, to serve an Interest, or to keep up a Ballance, make it their Business to foment Discord, and to keep Divisions a-foot, I will be bold to say, they know not what manner of Spirit they are of, they seek not Christ but themselves, their God is their Belly, and their Glory is in their Shame. And let them be Dissenters, or Church-Men, or of what Denomination they will, they are not true Christians. This Wisdom descendeth not from above, but is Earthly, Sensual, Devilish. For where Envyng and Strife is, there is Confusion and every Evil Work. But the Wisdom, that is from above, is first pure, then peacable, gentle, and easie to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisie. And the fruit of Righteousness is sown in Peace of them that make Peace, Jam. 3. 15. This Peace I am for. I love neither Faction nor Fury, Obstinacy nor Revenge; but could be glad to do any thing in the World, to convince, heal, or reconcile. And so I hope would many others. But I can see but little success of Attempts that have been made this way; and can have but little hopes, till God is pleased to take the Matter into his own Hands, to bring the Spirits of Men to a certain Temper on all sides, which yet the most do not seem to be inclined to; which hath been no small Trouble to me to observe, so that I have been almost tired out with vain Expectation in this Matter. But if I can do no good towards a Composure or Accommodation of these our Uncharitable and Unchristian Differences, I am resolved however I will not irritate or inflame, what I would be glad to heal; as I dare say, I should have done, if I had taken this Reflector's Measures.

But now we are upon it, let us consider, what Methods He would have had me used to bring those People to Church more frequently at other times: First, he saith, I should have taken the opportunity to Commemorate the great Charity of the Church of England, which like a Natural and Indulgent Mother, hath always open Arms to receive even her Froward and Rebellious Sons; and alloweth her Offices of Christian Burial to those, who despise her other Ordinances, that she patiently waits their Submission, while

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they live, and affords them the last Offices of Piety, when they come to Die; which sure might win upon all Ingenious Spirits to oblige her with Conformity and Obedience in all reasonable Service. *But I am apt to be of Opinion after all, that they would hardly have thought this Argument to have any great Weight in it. Charity is a very good and obliging Thing. But unless they can have Satisfaction given them about the Reasonableness and Unexceptionableness of the Service it self, which they Dissent from, which this Reflector doth not proceed to, nor doth advise me to it, tho' that was the chief Thing, and would have been most to the purpose; I doubt the Churches Charity alone, in the respect which he mentions, would hardly bring them to Conformity and Obedience to it.*

But to give Him his due: He doth not insist upon this, as the chief Thing, being apprehensive, 'tis likely, of the weakness of it taken by it self. It was something else he had principally in his Thoughts, as appears by his long Harangue about it, which I cannot but wonder at, viz. That it was an Holy Place where they were now Assembled, and where their Beloved Teacher chose to lie at Rest, which He had hinted before. And that I might have inferred, That they do not Die so much out of Charity with the Church, as is commonly imputed to them. For they like well enough to be Buried there, in the Church Ground. And when they come to depart out of this World, they leave their Bodies as a Legacy to it. And to leave a Legacy to one, is justly thought a Sign and Seal of Reconciliation and perfect Love. I never heard indeed that they were much out of conceit with the Earth of the Church-Floor. And if that be a sign of their Reconciliation to the Church, I find they are contented to give a Testimony of it at any time, when there is the like Occasion. And tho' these Brethren chuse to serve God in a Common and Unhallowed Barn, rather than in a Place Solemnly Devoted to be God's House of Prayer, yet on Death-Bed Thoughts they cannot Will their Bodies to be committed to the Threshing-Floor; but make it their last Option to be Buried with their Forefathers, as it is Natural, or Customary for all to desire; and let their Sepulchres at least be on the good old Consecrated Ground; tho' I dare say, they never think of the Consecration, when they do so. And who knoweth, but the Better Sort of Dissenters may have such Scruples on them as these? That if

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if they should be too soon admitted into the Bosom of the Church, they could by no means live up to the Rules and Orders of it; whereas delaying their Admission to the last, *when their Bodies are brought to Church*, They may possibly suppose, that such a final Action may determine their Salvation; and to be Buried in the Church be a sufficient Atonement for their long Absence from it. *And then upon this he saith*, I might have took occasion to perswade the Brethren there present, that they would be as well affected in their Life and Health, as they generally come to be in their last Sickness and point of Death; that is, to bring their Bodies to the Chuich, whilst their Souls are yet in them; which would be a more acceptable Sacrifice, than the bare Carcase and Refuse of Mortality. And, why should they desire to be Interred within the Precincts of the Church; unless they think it their own last Home and proper Place? Would any of us request, that our Dead Bodies should be carried into an Enemies Country, rather than be laid up in our Native Land? It must argue some good Affection sure to the Spot of Earth, where we resolve to lay down our Mortal Man, and to mix our common Dust. *And moreover therefore*, I should have encouraged these Brethren, not to forsake the Assembling of themselves together in that Holy Place, where the Mournful Occasion had now brought them. The Ground was not Polluted with Idolatrous Worship; if it had, their Reverend Teacher would not have desired to have found there an Ark of Rest for his Earthly Tabernacle. *By these extraordinary Arguments and Motives*, I should very powerfully have Exhorted the Brethren there present, to come to Church every Sunday in the Year. *And if any of them should have an Humour more Obstinate than ordinary, such rare and singular Reason and Rhetorick together, must needs have knock'd it down in an instant.*

Now I must own to this Reflector, That these wise Thoughts never came into my Head, and if they had, I should certainly have sent them packing, as soon as I had observed them. For I should certainly have disdained to have trifled in this manner. These Topicks might serve the turn for a young Declaimer, of whom, if he can but shew a little Wit, it is not expected, that he should talk much Reason. But doth this Reflector think, that to talk of Holy Places, and Holy Consecrated Ground, and of the contrary, Prophaneness of a Common and Unblessed Barn, and the Threshing-Floor,

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Floor, would be of such mighty force to bring Dissenters to Church? Would not this rather have offended, than perswaded them? Doth not he know, they have but little Opinion of such Holiness and Consecration? And yet that they chuse to Worship on the Thrashing-Floor, not because they think it best, but for want of a more convenient Place? And because they are willing to have their Dead Carcases, that are without Sence or Feeling, brought to be Buried in the Church Ground among their Forefathers, which they think is a convenient Repository for them, doth he think that this would do the mighty Feat to perswade them to bring their Living Souls to Church to Worship there, when they think, they can do better elsewhere? Doth not he know, that 'tis the Service that they take Exception against, and not the Walls, or Seats, or Ground, or Earth? And it is impossible, that He should trifle so, as to imagine, that the Better Sort of Dissenters should think, that if they should be too soon admitted into the Bosom of the Church, they could by no means live up to the Rules of it? Doth he think, that they take the Rules of our Church to be strider than those of their own? Or that they should think, that their chusing to be Buried at last in the Church Ground would Atonement for their long Absence from the Church Service, and that this being their final Action would determine their Salvation? Would not they take this to be a downright Affront to them, that we should take them to be such silly Creatures? Of all Men living, if I were to Discourse of this Matter, I would not come to this Reflector to suggest Heads or Arguments to me for it. Certainly it is a thousand times better, quite to hold one's Peace, than to talk thus quite cross to the Business. These are rare and singular Thoughts, and I dare say are none such of their kind; and this last especially He took for a notable piece of Wit and Ingenuity, it being no doubt his own most genuine Offspring; and was so taken with the mis-shapen Fancy, that he could not chuse but make much of it, and then by all means must produce it to open View, that all may admire it. But a little Charity, and Judgment wilbal, which this Reflector hath taken great care not to betray too much of, had most certainly finally determined it out of the way.

Now at last, He adds, That the Ceremonies are few, and inoffensive; the Prayers are Devout, and pathetically Good; the Sermons

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mons are Practical and Plain. I know nothing, that this Reflector hath said to the purpose, but only this. But if he had also a little farther set out the inoffensiveness of the Ceremonies, the goodness of the Prayers, and the usefulness of the Sermons, it would have been no doubt so much the more effectual. But it looks, as if he least descended upon this, He slight it over so quick. For this Reflector is only for Rare, Antique, and Unusual Things; a little plain honest Truth is not so agreeable to his ravings, and high-soaring Fancy. Doth he think, that such general Affirmations only would have been so powerful to perswade? Or that his, or my telling them so, which perhaps they have heard an hundred times over, would upon a sudden convince and alter their Minds, and change their relish of Things? If I had been to Discourse of this Matter, I think I ought to have gone a little deeper into the Controversie, taken it to pieces, and unravelled its Parts, to break the force of Objections. But was that a Time or Season for all this? Would not that have been a pretty undertaking at a Funeral? Besides, there are many Books writ about these Things; and many and long Disputes Printed about them. And if these do not prevail, I don't believe, that the slight Flurts of this Reflector's Rhetorick, or the most that I could say, will ever do it. For I have no such mighty conceit of my Abilities that way, whatever this Reflector hath of his: We have Disputed long enough. And we know the time, when some Severities have been used too. And yet we see, that all hath had but little Effect. I think therefore, we were all better yield, what we can, and shake Hands, and Love one another.

I have now said, what I intend to say in this Matter. If the Reflector be not satisfied herewith, it will be in vain for me any farther to attempt his Satisfaction. I shall not presume to give him any Advice, but let him alone to take his own Measures. Yet I shall not refuse any from him, provided he be happier in advising another time, than in what he hath done already. But if He intends to Dispute or Criminate on, I shall leave him to enjoy himself in his own Humour, but I intend to give my self no farther trouble about it.

To conclude, 'tis a great comfort to think of that State and Place, where all Imperfection shall be done away, and where all Differences

The Preface.

Differences and Contentions shall be at an end; To bere I hope yet to meet this now angry Brother, and do most heartily pray, that both He, and I, and whosoever hath any ill-will to me in this World, may by the free Grace of God pardoning our Sins, and accepting us in Christ Jesus, be at last received into the Embraces of our Blessed Lord, and may Live and Joy together in the most satisfying Fruition of his everlasting Love. And in the mean time, if to Preach up the Doctrines of our Holy Religion, with Zeal, Fer-
 your and Earnestness, in order to the preparing of Men for this, be Cant, Noise, and Assurance, I beseech the God of Heaven to give me more of it. Amen.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author hath also Published a Thanksgiving Sermon for the Delivery of this Kingdom from Popery and Arbitrary Power.

A Brier Defence of Infant-Baptism with an Appendix, wherein is shewed, That it is not necessary that Baptism should be Administred by Dipping.

The Minister's Last Advice to his People, being a Farewel Sermon Preached at *Almei in Dorsetshire*, at the Author's leaving the said Parish.

Rev.

I conceive, it is a great comfort to think of that time, and I trust, will be done away, and every all Differences

Rev. 14 13.

I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the Dead, which Die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.

IN these Words we have Three Things considerable, which we have an account of, from the Voice and Spirit of God.
First, That they, who Die in the Lord, are Blessed.
Secondly, The Reason or Parts of this Blessedness: They rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.
Thirdly, The time of the Beginning, or Commencement of this Blessedness. From henceforth.

First, They that Die in the Lord, are Blessed. But here the Question is, who they are, that may be said to *Die in the Lord*? Or what it is, that is intended in that Expression or Description of those, to whom the Blessing here doth belong.

I make no doubt, as it is also generally understood, that these Words were especially and principally intended for the comfort of such Christians, who were then like to suffer in those Days of Persecution of the Church of God; whereby *the Patience of the Saints*, of which he speaks, *ver. 12.* was so much Exercised. The outward State of the Church was then very dismal and sad, in those dark and afflictive Times. And therefore it was but need to give a Word of Comfort and Support to such, as were like to bear the Burden of those direful Calamities, that were about to fall upon them. This seems to be mainly intended here in this Blessing, that they might be encouraged thereby to hold out in their Faith and Profession, notwithstanding all that should fall upon them.

In this Sense then, by those that *Die in the Lord*, the Holy Martyrs must first be intended, who laid down their Lives for the
 C Lord,

Lord, that is, for his sake, or for their Adherence to his Faith and Gospel. This being a very grievous Case, God was pleased often in the Scriptures to provide for their Encouragement. It is
 2 Tim. 2. 11. a faithful saying, saith the Apostle, if we be Dead with him, we shall also Live with him: If we Suffer, we shall also Reign with him. And that we shall be also glorified together; and that the
 Rom. 8. 16. 17. Sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory, that shall be revealed in us. For, saith he, our light Affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. Seeing it is a Righteous Thing with God, to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you, who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, when he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them, that believe. And a great many more such Promises and Encouragements there are to Suffering Christians, who Die in the Lord.

But then it must be likewise supposed, That those, who Die thus in, or for the Lord, and for their Adherence to the Faith of Christ, do Die in, or under the sanctifying Power of that Faith also; the great Design of which was to Purifie the Heart, and Work by Love. Without which Effect obtained, Martyrdom it self, if it could be supposed, would not at all profit them; as we have the Apostle's own Resolution in the Case, 1 Cor. 13. 3. For, saith He, Tho' I give my Body to be burnt, and have not Charity, which is the great Christian Vertue, and comprehensive of all the rest, it profiteth me nothing. For the great End of the Faith of Christ, and of the belief of the Gospel, is to make Men Holy, to recover the Image of God in Men, that they may Live to his Glory. So that there is no Salvation without this, let Men's Sufferings for the Faith seem to have been never so great.

But then on the other side, they who Live and Die in the Power of that Faith, having felt the transforming and sanctifying Vertue thereof, and so have attain'd to the great End of it, tho' they have not undergone the Sufferings of Martyrdom, surely may be said to Die in the Lord also. They Die United to him, adhering to his Interest and Cause. Yea, they Die for him; fighting under his Banner, and in his Quatrel, against all his Enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. And these are also *Martyres Animo*, in the Disposition of their Minds, and they would by his Grace maintain the Field, for his Sake, to the very Death. And the sufferings of Mortification, which they have endured already
 are

are a kind of Martyrdom, in cutting off their Right Hands, and plucking out their Right Eyes, in bringing down the Old Man, and crucifying the whole Body of Sin: Therefore there is no doubt, but that to these also the Blessing here mentioned doth belong. For these, the Apostle tells us, *being made free from Sin, and become Servants to God, have their Fruit unto Holiness, and the end everlasting Life*, Rom. 6. 22. And all these shall partake of the Inheritance, *which are sanctified by Faith, that is in Christ*, Acts 26. 18. In which Sense 'tis a very comfortable Consideration to all truly Penitent and Sound Believers, and Good Christians.

For the evidencing of which, these few Things may be farther considered, to perswade us, that it shall be so.

First, Because the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ is in them, so that they are *led by the Spirit*, and *live in the Spirit*, by the Dictates, and according to the Rules of the Holy Spirit of God. *Now there is no Condemnation*, saith the Apostle, *to them that are in Christ Jesus, that walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made them free from the Law of Sin and Death*, Rom. 8. 1. *And if the Spirit of him, that raised up Jesus from the Dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the Dead shall also quicken your Mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God; and if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint Heirs with Christ.* These Men are the Temples of the Holy Ghost; and God will no more destroy those Temples, than he will allow others to do so. But the Spirit of God, with the Blessed Fruits of it, which is in them when they Die, is a sure Pledge and Earnest of more Blessings to be received afterwards.

Secondly, From hence it will follow, That the Image of God is upon them, and that in a more eminent manner, than it is upon any others. They being renewed after the Image of him that Created them, *in Righteousness and true Holiness*. So that they have not only the Natural Image of God, as it may be called for distinction sake, in the Spirituality, Powers, and Immortality of their Spirits; but they have the Moral Image of God also, which is the Glory of the Divine Nature; which is wrought in them by the transforming Power of the Holy Ghost, to whose Holy Dictates and Motions they have been brought to submit themselves. And by this Means they are according to their Measure made like unto God. And thereby it must needs be, That God's Love of Com-

placency must be towards them, and his Delight must be in them. For however there may be some Blots in this Image in them, yet these being not such, as to spoil the Beauty thereof, God will have a favourable Respect unto them; and they may depend upon it, that He will not cast them off.

These Men are not of a Temper, or Spirit, for Devils, or Infernal Spirits, to dwell with them. For they do oppose their Dark Kingdom, and are grieved at the Conversation of the Wicked, by whom it is promoted. And therefore they may be sure, they shall never be put to Herd with them in the Infernal Lake hereafter. But the time will come, when all shall be carried to their Like; tho' it cannot be done here, where the Tares and the Wheat must be suffered to grow together. But at last the Sheep shall be put by *themselves*, and the Goats by *themselves*; all Wicked Men by *themselves*, and with their Patrons and Masters, the Devils and Infernal Spirits, whose Work they have done, and whose Image they bare; and all Holy and Good Men by *themselves*, together with Christ their Lord, whom they have serv'd, and whose Image is upon them. So both Parties would have it; and so it shall be. For they differing so vastly in their Tempers, so far as they differ, are even weary of one another here; so that God will certainly order a Separation of them hereafter, that they shall be far enough asunder.

Thirdly, By what hath been said, it appears, That the great End of Christ's Death, and Resurrection, and Government, is obtained upon Good Men. For God sent his Son to Bless us, in *Acts 3. 26.* turning us every one from our Iniquities. And He hath Exalted *Cap. 5. 31.* him with his Right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance to Israel, and Remission of Sins. His great Business was to reduce Men to their Allegiance, and to bring them back to God, from whom they were departed. The Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to that End, &c.

Tit. 2.

Now this being done, it becomes Christ, as their Redeemer and Head, to take care of them, and to look after them, that they may attain the End of their Faith, the Salvation of their Souls. And so he assured us, He will do, *Jo. 10. 27.* My Sheep hear my Voice, I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never Perish. For, saith he; He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, He it is that Loveth me; and He that Loveth me, shall be Loved of my Father; and I will Love him, and will manifest my self unto him, *Jo. 14. 21.* And where

where I am, there shall my Servant be; and if any Man serve me, him will my Father Honour, Jo. 12. 26. And, Father, I will that those, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am, that they may behold my Glory, which thou hast given me, Jo. 17. 24. They having heard, and learned of the Father, and being come unto him, He hath undertaken for them. Now they are his Members, and therefore He will not lose them. They now *Rom. 14. 8.* Live unto the Lord, and shall Die unto the Lord, so that whether they Live or Die, they are the Lords; and He will certainly see, that they shall not miscarry. For He hath Power to save them; all Power in Heaven and Earth being committed to him. So that *Mat. 22.* as the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickneth them, so the Son *Jo. 6. 21.* quickneth whom he will. For as the Father hath Life in himself, so He hath given to the Son, to have Life in himself; and this Life he will Communicate to his Members; as it certainly concerns him to do. He would at last lose his own Honour in the work of Redemption else. For it would seem, either that his Merit and Satisfaction are Incompetent, or that He wanted Power and good Will to do more for them. But He hath faithfully assured us, That He that believeth in him, tho' he were Dead, yet shall he Live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in him shall never Die, Jo. 11. 25. But because I Live, saith he, ye shall Live also.

Fourthly, They being now brought to partake of those Qualifications, which make them meet for this Blessedness, they have by Vertue of God's Promise and Covenant also a Right to it. For it *Col. 1. 12.* is to be an Inheritance of Saints, and they being Sanctified, are therefore become meet for it. And this is God's Covenant, that *Heb. 8. 10.* when He hath put his Laws into their Minds, and wrote them in their Hearts; that He will be to them a God; and they shall be to him a People; and that He will be merciful to their Unrighteousness, and their Sins and their Iniquities will He remember no more. And therefore they shall be freed from all that Death and Misery, that would be the Effects and Consequence of them. And this is the Record, saith the Apostle, *1 Jo. 5. 11.* That God hath given unto us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. So that He that hath the Son, as all have, that believe in him, and submit to him as their Lord and Saviour, hath Life by Vertue of God's Promise, and He that hath not the Son, hath not Life. For this is the Will of him that sent me, saith our Saviour, *John 6. 39.* that I should see the Son, and believe on him, and have Eternal Life; and I will raise him up at the last Day, Jo. 6. 40.

Secondly,

Secondly, I now come to the Second Thing observed in the Words, *etc.* the Nature and Parts of this Blessedness of those that Die in the Lord, which if I could thoroughly Explain, would be an abundant Evidence of their being Blessed. Now this is Expressed in two Particulars, *They rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.*

First, *They rest from their Labours.* Now Labour is a very toilsome and tiresome Thing, whether it be of the Body or Mind; which yet we are all here Exercised with, more or less. But the Comfort of it is, it is this World only, that is the Place for Labour and Work, for Pain and Sufferings; the next is the Place of Retribution and Reward, where there shall be no more Toil or Trouble, no more Sorrow or Pain, no more Combat or Contention with any Evil whatsoever at all.

The *Labours* here meant in the Text, may most properly signify the Sufferings and Persecutions for the Faith of Christ; as they that *Die in the Lord* may most properly signify the Holy Martyrs and Confessors, who shall for ever hereafter be freed from these Labours and Sufferings, for then they are all past the Pikes. The Devil, the Accuser of the Brethren, the *Apollyon*, the *Abaddon*, that gives them here so much Disturbance, shall then be far enough off from them; and neither He, nor his wicked Instruments, shall ever come near to hurt them more. For the Devil and Wicked Men, as you have heard, are all to be by themselves; and there shall be a great Gulf fixt between them, and the Servants of God; so that they shall never be able to bring their Fire and Faggots, their Wheels, and Gibbets near them there. There shall be nothing to hurt or destroy in all that Holy Mountain.

But if the Servants of God should be freed then from all these kind of Labours, yet if there should be any of some other kind for them to undergo, it could not be perfectly well with them, nor could they be said to be perfectly Blessed; which yet it is designed, they shall be. So that we may well conclude, that it is not only the Labour of Persecutions and Martyrdoms that then they shall be freed from, but from all Labour and Pains whatsoever, that should bring any Sufferings along with it.

First, Most certainly *Then* there shall be no more Labour for or about the Body, to nourish or feed, to maintain or preserve it: Because then there shall be no more weakness of the Body; no more Sickness of pained Limbs, or decay of Spirits, so seek a Remedy for. The Body, indeed will not presently after Death be raised

(7)

raised to this State of Life and Blessedness; but must lodge a while in the Grave, which is appointed for its Dormitory, till the Judge shall come, and the Trumpet shall sound, to raise up all that are asleep in Jesus. But when once it hath been strained thro' the Grave, then it shall leave all its Corruption behind it. And it shall be a weak and natural Body no longer. *It is sown indeed in Weakness, but it is raised in Power; it is sown in Corruption, but it is raised in Incorruption; it is sown in Dishonour, but it is raised in Glory; it is sown a Natural Body, but it is raised a Spiritual Body,* 1 Cor. 15. 42. And therefore it shall not need those Supports and Refreshments then, as now it doth. Then there will be no need of Meats and Drinks to maintain it. *Meats are now for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats; but God shall destroy both it, and them,* 1 Cor. 6. 13. For the Body then shall be *Healthy, and Well, and Strong,* without them all. For *He shall change our Vile Bodies,* saith the Apostle, *and shall make them like unto his Glorious Body.* When our Saviour himself saith, *That the Righteous shall shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father.* So that tho' they shall have the same Body for Substance, yet not of the same Constitution, or all its parts for the same Offices and Purposes. Our Bodies then will be no more such Dead and Lumpish Things, as they are now; but Active and Vigorous, even as Spirits themselves, and therefore without Fainting and Weariness. Therefore all those Trades and Callings, which are here so necessary to provide for their Support, or to secure and defend them from Cold and Ill Weather, shall then be at an end. *There we shall have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens.* It shall never decay, or grow leaky more. There will be no Winds or Storms to annoy; no ill Airs or bad Weather; no dirty Roads, or painful Travelling; no Darkness or Night. For there is the Throne of God; all Lightsome, Pure, and Blissful, there shall be no Night, because no need of Rest, and yet no Weariness in the perpetual Day, where the Servants of God, tho' they are always at Work, yet are never tired, they shall be so Holy and Strong, and their Work so Good, that they *rest not Day, nor Night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come;* but are singing *Hallelujahs to God, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.*

Secondly, Moreover, not only Bodily Labour, but the Labour of Study and Mortification, for the improvement and refining of our Souls, shall then be over likewise; it is a great deal of Pains and Labour

Phil. 3.
Ult.

Matt. 13.
41.

2 Cor. 5. 1.

Rev. 48.
Cap. 5. 13.

Labour we must be at here, for a very small Improvement. We must read many Books; and *much Reading is a weariness to the flesh*, Eccl. 12. 12. as it is in the Margin: It tireth the Spirits, and impares the Health. And yet this we must endure in the getting of Knowledge; we must go through many Studies, and spend many wearisome Nights and Days; and be a long time, either in making Observations of our own; or gathering from others, before we can come almost to any thing. And in this we must sustain many times a great expence of Spirits: For the Intense Exercise of our Minds will draw our Bodies into consent. And the Spirits being so much taken up one way, there are hardly enough left many times, to discharge the Vital Offices of Nature. So that the Blood becomes Impoverish'd, the Face Pale, the Limbs Languid and Weak, and the Vessels obstructed within, that are the very Channels of Life. And yet after all this, it is but a little Knowledge for the most part, that we are able to attain unto, of any kind whatsoever. That, which we get indeed, is very Pleasant, as little as it is. For *Wisdom excelleth Folly, as far as Light excelleth Darkness*, Eccl. 2. 13. Yet in much *Wisdom is much Grief too*, and *He that increaseth Knowledge, increaseth Sorrow*, Eccl. 1. 18. And after all, a great deal of that Knowledge, which we spend so much of our Time about, I doubt, is hardly one degree above Folly it self.

But in that State hereafter, there will be none of all this Toil for the improvement of our Minds. For there is the Land of Vision, where we shall see God, the chief Good; *as He is*, and shall with open Face behold his Glory. Now we see but through a Glass darkly, saith the Apostle, but then Face to Face; now we know but in part, but then shall we know even as also we are known. And if we shall have such a Vision or Sight of God himself, then we may be sure, the Knowledge of no other Thing shall be hid from us, as far as it may be of any use to us, for our Comfort and Happiness. For he that giveth us the greater, will not withhold from us the less. Then we may expect to see, and behold many Things, by an immediate Intuition, and to have a clear and plain Introspection into their Natures and Properties. Or at least, the longest train of Reasoning will be easie and quick, Principles will be open and plain, the Impressions deep, the Connexion between Things clear and apparent. So that the Mind will be no more in Pain, or lose it self in long or tedious Deductions. For the Powers of the Minds will be advanced and perfected, the

1 Cor. 13.
12.

several

several Objects distinct and manifest, Idea's of Things will be present to his, or ready at a Call; so that the turn of the Mind to its several Objects will be as easie, as that of the Eye is now.

And thus it shall be for Grace and Vertue, and all the Moral Perfections of the Soul. We shall be troubled with none of those Difficulties, that here we meet with, in the acquirement thereof. Here we must Work, and Work hard, to *Work out our own Salvation*, and must do it *still with Fear and Trembling*. We must *give all Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure*; and to add to what we have received. *We must strive to enter in at the strait Gate, because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way, that leadeth to Live Everlasting.* And there can be no striving without Pain. We must *deny our Selves, and mortifie our Members, which are upon the Earth.* And because we have not yet attained, we must *forget those Things that are behind, and reach forward to those Things that are before.* We must *gird up the Loins of our Minds*, and sweat and bestir our selves with all our Might.

It must be so here, and it cannot be otherwise. Because our Knowledge is little and imperfect; our Affections and Appetites strong to many Things, which commonly obstruct the Divine Life. The Solicitations of the *Flesh* are sometimes tumultuous and vehement. And we have contracted many *Ill Habits*, which are like a second Nature, and are not easily deposed or laid aside again. And the *Ill Examples and Customs* of the World, with the *Innuendoes and Flatteries* of some, and the *Menaces and Discouragements* which we meet with from others, the *Kindness of Carnal Friends*, and the *Threatnings and Fury of Enemies*, are all apt to have a great Power upon us. And here, be sure the Devil will never leave his Trade of *Tempting and Seducing to Sin*, as long as he can come at us. So that what from one Cause, and what from another, we are engaged here in a continual Fight. So that if we look no farther than Men, it is a wonder, that ever we should hold out. Nor indeed could we, if we were not kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation.

But in that State there will be none of all this, and therefore no occasion for all this Trouble and Pains. Because then we shall be freed from our Errors and Mistakes, and Misprisions about Things. We shall be freed from Evil Habits, and Evil Customs, from Inordinate Appetites and Corrupt Affections. For then we shall be like God. For beholding God Face to Face, we shall be changed into the same Image, in a very Glorious manner. Beloved,

faith the Apostle, *now we are the Sons of God, but it doth not appear, what we shall be; but this we know, when He shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as He is,* 1 Jo. 3. 2. And, faith St. Paul, *Our Life is now hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall we appear also with him in Glory,* Col. 3. 3. Then we shall have no Flesh to sollicit us to Evil any more; because it shall be changed, and be no more as it is. And Evil Men and Seducers shall be gone, so that there shall be no more Discouragements or Evil Examples from them. And the Devil shall be cast out, so that He shall Tempt no more. And we shall continually live in the presence of God and Christ, and under their immediate Influences; for the *Tabernacle of God shall be with Men*, and they are to be where He is; and in the Blessed Company of Angels and Saints, who are all Pure and Holy; so that then the Servants of God shall have no more trouble, either to Purifie their Souls, or to keep them Pure.

Thirdly, And it will be a very great Addition to all, That then there shall be no more Labour, or Care, or Sollicitude for others neither; as here there often times must be. Because all shall be then in the same most perfect and happy State. Parents shall be at Care for their Children no more. The Poor shall undergo no more hard Labour, as here they do, to provide for their Families; they shall no more go Cold, or fare Hard, for want of better Provisions. For there shall be no Poor in Heaven; but all, Kings and Princes, sitting upon their Thrones of Glory. For it is their *Fathers good Pleasure to give them a Kingdom*. There will be no more need of those Things, which now we are forc'd to take such Care about, in this Imperfect and Animal State. And there will be no Enemies to Invade, or Extort from us what we have. Nor shall we need to be at any Concern to Guard our selves against the Violence or Malice of those, that would despoil or ravish away our Comforts from us. For none of them all shall come there.

Then Private and Publick Labours shall be all over. There shall be no more Labour to preserve, or purge the Church from any of those Things, that now do so much annoy it. For then there will be no Errors or Heresies to Corrupt it; no Schisms or Factions to divide it; no Animosities or Quarrels, Heart-Burnings, or Contentions to disturb its Peace. For then *Christ shall present it to himself a Glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing,* Eph. 5. 27. And

And then there shall be as little Labour, to preserve the Peace or Quiet of Government, from Tyranny or Invasion, from Men of Fraud and Violence, of furious Passions and unbridled Lusts. Because there shall be no such there. And all shall be under the most perfect and immediate Rule and Government of God himself, who shall be with them, and dwell among them. And all shall perfectly Love their Governour, and his Government; and shall *Love one another, with a Pure Heart fervently.* Oh Blessed State, and Blessed Condition, when all this Trouble of every Kind shall be at an end! Yet so it shall be then.

Secondly, Their Works do follow them. That is, the Reward of their Works; for so it must needs be understood. Some indeed understand it of the good Effects of all the Sufferings of Confessors and Martyrs in this Life, in the Fall of the Man of Sin, and bringing down the present Kingdom of Darkness. But this being here Assigned as part of their Blessedness, it seems to me that it must signify a Reward to themselves; and can mean no less, than God's Approbation of what they have done in his Service, and for his Name, and the Reward that He gives them thereupon.

It is indeed a Reward of Grace, and it is so Transcendant, and surpassing all that they have done and suffered; that, as the Apostle saith, *The Sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be* Rom. 8. 18. *compared with the Glory, that shall be revealed in them.* And *these light Afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for them* 2 Cor. 4. 17. *a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory,* as was also observed before. However, a Reward it is, and that which belongs, not only to those that in the strictest Sense Die in, or for the Lord; but also to all the Faithful Servants of Christ, who may be truly said likewise to Depart hence in the Lord, in his Faith and Service, in Relation to him; and Union with him, as their Lord and Head. So that *Verily Men shall say, there is a Reward* Ps. 58. 11. *of the Righteous.* And therefore, *say to the Righteous, it shall be well with him; for they shall Eat the Fruit of their Doings.* For God shall reward every Man according to his Works. But here Mar. 16. is the Place of Work, and then hereafter of Reward. When 27. *whatever any Man hath done heartily, as to the Lord, He shall receive for it the Reward of the Inheritance,* Col. 3. 24. So that in this World there is Striving, and Fighting, and Working, and then is the time of Recompence for all their Work and Labour of Love, which they shall find *shall not be in vain in the Lord.* 1 Cor. 15. And this shall be so great, that it is a time of Coronation and *Glory* Utc.

Glory to them, when it shall appear, what shall be done to the
 1 Pet. 5. 4. *Men whom God will Honour. For they shall receive a Crown of
 Glory, which fadeth not away. For, be thou faithful unto Death,
 faith our Saviour, and I will give thee a Crown of Life, Rev. 2.
 10. Then they come to receive their Robes, and to have Palms
 of Triumph in their Hands, and to be set upon Thrones of Glory.
 For, to him that overcometh, saith He, will I grant to sit with me
 on my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my
 Father on his Throne, Rev. 3. 21. And this shall be the Portion
 of all the Faithful Servants of God. For, God will render to
 every Man, saith the Apostle, according to his Deeds; to them,
 who by patient continuance in well Doing, seek for Glory, Honour
 and Immortality, He will give Eternal Life, Rom. 2. 6.*

This indeed is all of Grace; but therefore, because it is of
 Grace, it shall be so much the greater. For if it were to be given
 in proportion to our Merit, then it could be but little; because
 our Merit is but little, or rather, properly speaking, none at all.
 But now being to be of Grace, it will therefore be exceeding great;
 to set forth the Glory and Love of God, who as a great King, will
 give like himself; and to set forth the Price of our Redeemer's Mer-
 its, and to shew how high and valuable they are.

This is most certain for *One Thing*, that there will be a most
 intimate and transporting Manifestation of the Ever-blessed God
 himself to his Beloved People. Then they shall not only see his
Back Parts, as *Moses* did, that is, some little and low degree of
 Splendor and Beauty, but then they shall see him with open Face,
 in his highest Lustre, and most inconceivable Glory. Then they
 shall see Christ in all his Glory, and they shall be with him. Then
 is the time of the great Supper of the Lamb, when He will man-
 ifest and display himself in all his Loveliness and Beauty to all
 about him. Here is the place of Faith and Hope; but there is
 the place of Vision and Fruition. Here we sip a little by the
 way; as in a Land of Drought; but we are not yet come to the
 Ps. 16. 11. *Rivers of Pleasure; they are at God's Right Hand, in whose Pre-
 sence is fulness of Joy.* So that there the Saints and Servants of
 God shall never Hunger or Thirst more. Here we have the Tastes
 Eph. 1. 14. *and first Fruits of the Spirit, as a Pledge and Earnest in the way;*
 but there is the full Enjoyment of the *Purchased Possession*. We
 cannot expect here so much in the way, as when we come to our
 Father's House. Here we are but at the *Boothool*; it can't be with
 us now, as when we come to the Throne of God.

Yea,

Yea, such is our State here, That we must be tried, and Disciplined, and Corrected sometimes; there is a Necessity sometimes for it. And therefore *if need be, for a Season, we are in Heaven* ^{1 Pet. 1. 6.} *ness, through manifold Temptations.* We are Sinners, and live among Sinners, and therefore sometimes we must expect Sinners fare. Our Corruptions must be melted down in the Furnace of Affliction, when there is no other way to purge us from them. And our Father must sometimes Frown upon us, and Chastise us, because the Best of us all are sometimes apt to be wandring and neglectful of our Duty. *Before I was Afflicted, the Psalmist observes, I went astray; but now have I learned thy Ways.* Afflictions tend to File and Polish us; to clear us of the Rust and Rubbish that is apt to cleave unto us. God *Chastens us* therefore ^{Heb. 12. 10.} *for our Profit, that we might be Partakers of his Holiness.* For tho' no Chastning for the present seems to be Joyous, but Grievous; nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness to them, that are Exercised thereby.

But then hereafter there will be no occasion for any of this Discipline any more; because of that perfect Transformation into the Image, and Likeness of God, which then his People shall have. *For his Servants shall serve him, and they shall see his Face,* Rev. 22. 3. So that there will be the fulness of Light and Love; and God shall never withdraw from them the Light of his Countenance any more.

I have not time to tell you, as much as I might, what all the Reward will be. And besides, I have prevented my self in part already, in what I have said before. Only in short, it will be *A State of all Perfection.* And that is enough. For there is the *General Assembly of the Church of the First-Born, and the Spirits of Just Men made Perfect,* Heb. 12. 23. So then, *That which is Perfect shall come, and that which is in part, shall be done away,* 1 Cor. 13. 10. Where the Apostle doth certainly mean a Perfection of Knowledge and Grace, of that Divine Grace of Charity, which He elsewhere tells us, is the *Fulfilling of the Law.* And that must needs imply an Enlargement and Perfection of our Faculties, and a Cure of all their Weakness and Infirmities. For full and perfect Habits of Light and Good in the Mind and Heart, can never subsist without a full Extention and Purification thereof. And then from thence we may certainly infer, that there shall be a perfect Communication of Good, to answer to the fulness of their Enlargement. Or else the Enlargement of our Faculties would rather

rather be a Torment and Vexation, than a Satisfaction, if they have not Objects proper to suit them. And from all this there must needs flow an intire and unspeakable *Satisfaction*, a fulness of Delight and Pleasure running over in the Soul. To which this will be a wonderful Addition, the consideration of the everlasting Duration and Continuance of all this Blessedness. That it shall for ever continue without Interruption, Intermision or Decay. For

1 *Thef.* 4. so it shall be, for as much as *we shall for ever be with the Lord*, who will for ever Delight in his People, ever take Care of them, and be a Guard to them, that no Evil shall come near them. Oh Blessed Day, and Blessed State, when all this Good shall be imparted to them! But when will all this be?

Thirdly, I now proceed therefore to the Third Thing, observable in the Words, which is the time of the beginning, or the Commencement of this Happiness; which shall be *Henceforth*, i. e. from the very Day or time of their Death, or Departure out of this World. Not that they shall be presently instated in all that full Possession of Good which I have mention'd; which cannot be, whilst their Bodies remain still in the Grave, or before the Resurrection. Therefore the full Possession or Perfection of Happiness, is not to be expected till the Coming of Our Lord; as the

Col. 3. 4. *Scripture generally sets it forth to us. But when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall we appear with him in Glory.* But yet this Happiness is to begin on the Day of the Saints Dissolution; *Henceforth*, from the very time of their Death. They shall Rest from all their Labours presently, and their Reward doth then begin: I know there are other Senses given of this Expression; but I can see nothing but this, that answers the Design of comforting the Afflicted Servants of God in their present Sufferings, which this Text is intended for. There is nothing but this Possession of the Reward at Death, can denominate them Blessed from *Henceforth*.

If they might Glorifie God in this World, tho' it were in Suffering, yet they would rather desire to do so, than be gone hence, unless they may come to the present Enjoyment of their Happiness. How are they Blessed from *Henceforth*, in having the Reward of their Works, if there be no such Reward yet to be enjoyed? If the Soul were to sleep in the Grave in a lumbish and unactive State, where then would be their Blessedness? It were better to continue longer here, in performance of their Master's Work, and in the Service of their Lord, as long as God shall be pleased to uphold them,

them, and enable them to hold out in it, tho' it were in the midst of Labour and Suffering. And they would chuse to do so, because hereby they would further their Reward hereafter; when God shall Reward Men, not only according to the Nature, but also according to the Measure and Degree of their Labours and Sufferings: All the Troubles and Labours of this Life therefore would rather be endured a great deal, than One would chuse to be put into an insensible and unactive State, where there is neither Work, nor Enjoyment; no One, that hath any thing of Christian Zeal and Magnanimity would be glad to be removed hence, so long as God is pleased to give him Strength and Patience to hold out, unless He might immediately pass to the Enjoyment of that Happiness, which is the End of all his present Seeking, and Striving, and Labouring.

It was this that put St. Paul into such a Strait, that he knew not which to chuse, *Phil. 1. 21. For to me to Live is Christ*, saith he, He being heartily devoted to him, and being glad to be employed in his Service; but then *to Die was present Gain*. For that He must mean, or else it had been better, and more Gain to live still. *For if I Live in the Flesh, this is the Fruit of my Labour*, to be serviceable to Christ in the Conversion of more to him; *Tet what I shall chuse, I know not*. Why? Would not the Apostle chuse to serve Christ in the Work of the Gospel, rather than cease to be? *But I am in a Strait betwixt two, having a Desire to depart, and to launch out from this Body and this World; and to be with Christ, which is far better*. That was the Reason why He was willing to be gone from the Body, because then he was to be with Christ; and that would be far better for him. For in this the Apostle is very Positive and Peremptory, *2 Cor. 5. 1. For we know*, saith he, *if our Earthly House of this Tabernacle, the Body, were dissolved, we have a better Dwelling for our Spirit prepared, a Building of God, an Habitation in the Heavenly Glory, an House not made with Hands, of Mens or Mortal Façture or Procreation, Eternal and undecaying there*. And *in this therefore we Groan earnestly, and desire to be clothed upon with that our House, which is from Heaven*. Knowing, saith he, *Ver. 6. that whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord; therefore are willing rather, to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord*. So that it seems the Souls of Good Men at Death are to leave the Body, and then be absent from it, and then they are forthwith to be present with Christ. So *2 Tim. 4. 7. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord*
shd

the Righteous Judge shall give me for that Day. And what Day was that? But the Day of his Departure, of which he speaks, Ver. 16. and saith was then ready at Hand. And that we may not think that this was only a Priviledge belonging to him, or to such Excellent Persons, as he was, He adds, *and not to me only, but to all them that Love his appearing.* So that we see, that this is a Blessing, that all the Faithful Servants and Followers of Christ shall partake of, as well as the Blessed Apostle himself. But Now the Enjoyment of this Happiness in the Regions above, I do not only in Charity hope, as I would of every ordinary Good Christian; but do most fully believe, is the State and Condition of this Reverend and Good Man, whose Relicks we have now before us, and upon the occasion of the Interment of which we are here met. Of whom therefore I cannot but say something, tho' not near so much, as his Character, I believe, doth deserve; my Acquaintance with him having been so long Interrupted, as for some Years.

He seem'd to me to be an Aged Person, when I first knew him; but by Temperance and Wise Conduct, and the Blessing of God thereupon, and by the Divine Protection warding off Evil Harms and Accidents from him, which might either have cut him off, or broken his Health much sooner, how hath his Life been prolonged to almost half the common Age of Man since that time? It being now towards Thirty Years ago since I was first acquainted with him. That which I had always observed in him, was a great Kindness and Benignity of Disposition, joined with an Undissembled Integrity and Uprightness; whereby I dare say, he wish'd Well to all Men, and bore a Loving Respect in his Carriage to all, and rejoic'd in all Men's Welfare and Happiness; and was glad, when he could himself any ways promote it. (Which I doubt not) he had learned from his Great Lord and Master, who was kind unto all, and who by his Pattern and Precepts had made Universal Love the great Character of his Religion. And by this means, one would think, He could not have many Enemies. For who could find in their Hearts to be Enemies to one, in whom there was so much to be Goodness? And this Goodness was set off by a profound Humility, and most Consideration and Respect to the Meanest, the Lowest, the Last. By this, He was not so much set off by himself, as to set a Value upon the Praise and Performances of some Young Rellions above his own Gray headed Knowledge and Experience.

By this Kindness and Humility, his Self-distrust and Self-abasement, He was preserved from the Fiercely and Furious Zeal, which is the Blemish of some of all Parties, that differ in some Circumstantials of Religion and Worship. He could not imagine, why a Difference in some Circumstantials, should make Men Hate and Curse one another, among whom there was a good Accord in the Main and Substantial Points of Christian Doctrine. Therefore He could bear a Kind and Friendly Respect to other Good Men of other Perswasions besides his own, as He would hope for the like from them.

He had a great Calmness in his own Temper, but He was Forward and Fervent in Spirit, in the Service of his God; as appeared in his Devotions in a Private, but much Honoured Family, where I have heard him. And his long and continu'd Labour in the Service of God, in that Way wherein He thought He might Glorify God, even to extreme Old Age, is a great Instance of his Delight therein, of his Pious Zeal for the promoting of Religion, and of his Earnest Desire of the Eternal Welfare of Men. He always appeared to me to be one of Eminent Piety, of Exact Walking, of an Healing Spirit, and to be full of Love to God, and Good Men of different Denominations. He was not for a Wrangling or Disputative Divinity, which tends to Gender Strife; but for Plain, Practical Godliness in its Life and Power, which hath always indeed most Sweetness in it, and so will especially appear to have at the last.

His Afflictions, I hear, in many Respects, have been many, but that his Faith and Patience also have been as Eminent. Wherein He deserves, as in many other Things, your Pious Imitation. In a Word, He Lived long in the Exercise of Piety towards God, and of Good Will to Men; and how He Died, you know.

I could gladly have enlarged much more upon his Character; but these few Things, I could not but mention, being always bound to have his Memory in Honour. For I must ever acknowledge, I have had him of Old in many Respects my Friend, in some Respects as my Father and Patron, and in some others a Guide and Director, when I first entred my self upon this Sacred Function. This Acknowledgment I cannot but take this Opportunity to express; nor do I know any just Reflections, that any can make upon it.

I shall now only make an Inference or two from what I have said on the foregoing Subject, and then Conclude.

First, To Comfort, and Prepare Good Men for the Expectation of their Death, that they may not be Frighted at the Approach of it, as such a Dreadful Thing, it being most certain, that when they remove out of this Tabernacle, they enter into an Estate of present Bliss in the presence of their Lord.

If the Soul indeed were to lye in a stupid Lethargy in the Grave, and have no more Sense or Reflection, or Enjoyment after the time of Dissolution, they should desire to continue here as long as they can, that they may bring more Honour to God in the World, and so might further their Reward hereafter thereby. And they might have just Cause to take Death for their Enemy, whensoever it comes, that should deprive them of so great Advantages here, and bring them none in the room. But there is no fear of all this. The Soul is an Active Spark, the Breath of the Almighty; which, whilst it is in the Body, by the Laws of Union that were fix'd in the Original Creation by the great Creator, must sympathize with it. But when the Body is no longer a tolerable Habitation for it, it will then Dissodge, and take its Flight, and the Holy Angels wait to carry it aloft, through all the Airy Armies of invisible Fiends, to place it above, out of the reach of all their Malice. For the Soul is a Thinking Substance, which hath no Relation to Matter; but is of another Nature from it, and hath quite other Properties in its Idea. And being Immaterial, it is not subject to Putrifaction or Dissolution of Parts, because it hath no Parts, and therefore none to be dissolved, but must in its own Nature Subsist and Live still. But whatever the Philosophy of the Soul may be, we have full assurance from Divine Revelation of its continued Life, and greater Perfection and Enjoyment after Death than before. Our Saviour told his Disciples, That *Meh, tho' they might kill the Body, yet were not able to kill the Soul*, and therefore bid them not be afraid of them.

Mat. 10.
28.

Rom. 8.

The Body indeed must Die, because of Sin; but the Spirit, the better part, is Life, because of Righteousness. So that Good Meh have no Cause to be mightily Affrighted at the Approach of Death. For tho' it be the King of Terrors to outward appearance, yet they may look upon it, as a Routed or Conquered Enemy, as a Serpent, that hath lost its Sting and Strength, which howsoever it may His, and shew its Rage and Fury, yet cannot hurt. So that Good Men may Triumph over it, and over all Things *else besides*; because *neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principallities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor Height,*

Rom. 8. 38.

nor

nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate them from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. But in and over all these Things, they are more than Conquerors through him that Loved them. Death is now rather a Friend to them, the Messenger of the great King, to invite them to his Supper, which he hath prepared for them.

The same Comfort there is at the Departure of Others, Friends and Relations, that Die in the Lord. For now they are past from all their Labours and Troubles, from all their Fears and Dangers, their Pains and Sufferings whatsoever, and are gone but to take Possession of the Promised Crown. It is a Loss to us indeed, that they are gone; and Self-Love makes us to Mourn and Complain at it. But what do They lose, in leaving us, or the World; and the little Accommodations of this Life, that are now entered upon the Possession of the Inheritance. Tho' we lose by them, because they are gone, yet we ought not sure to Grudge at their Happiness.

Secondly, To Exhort all to the Faith and Service of Christ our Lord, that they may also Die in him, and so be Blessed. For we must certainly Live to him now, if we will Die in him, or be United to him at the last. We must have Union with him in Life, as our Lord and Head; if we think to have Union with him, and Relation to him at Death, as our Everlasting Saviour. We can by no means expect to Live with God hereafter, if we will not Live to his Honour here. We can never expect, that He will receive us into his Embraces at last, if we continue now in an Hatred of him, and Enmity against him. Neither the Work, nor Enjoyments of Heaven, can be suitable to an Unholy Soul, that is not transformed into the Divine Likeness. For what should such an One do with God, or among the Saints above, that hath nothing at all of a Divine or Saint-like Nature? But if we are now made like God, and Live to him, He will be sure then to take Care of his Own. For the Foundation, or Covenant of God, standeth sure, having this Seal, *He that knoweth them that are his, and let every One that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from Iniquity.*

2 Tim. 2.
19.

Let all Wicked Men see therefore the absolute Necessity, and the great Advantages of Religion. They are apt now to have hard Thoughts of it, and to Censure it sore for a very Soure and Melancholly Thing; tho' that is a very great Mistake and Misprision; but how will it be at last? Or what will their Thoughts be of it hereafter? Then they will find, that this had been the only way

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to Happiness and Bliss, whatever they think of it now. And should not Wife Men have Futurity in Account, as well as the present Time? Should they look only at their present Pleasures and Advantages, and neglect the future, which are infinitely greater? Or do they think to Die the Death of the Righteous, and yet will not Live his Life? This cannot be.

But you must begin now, and should not put off the Study of Piety and Holiness, till hereafter neither. You Young Ones must not think to Live to the Age that this Holy Man of God hath done. This is a rare and peculiar Favour, which very few can expect. You may be called and summon'd away before you are aware. However, can you ever begin to be Wise too soon, or Blessed too soon? For this is certain, that you are never Wise, or Blessed, but in the way of Religion. And yet how apt are the most to put this off still, and to cry, 'tis too soon yet, 'tis too soon yet. Yet a little more Sleep, and a little more Slumber, and a little more folding of the Hands to Sleep. A little more of the Pleasures and Vanities of Sin; a little more unjust Gain, and then we will take up, and Repent, and Return. And yet when the Time is come, that they have set, they are as backward to it as before, or worse. Their Hearts are more Hardened, and they are farther off from Repentance and Religion, than they were some Years ago. And will you always be thus deceived?

You that continue in Sin, and the Impenitency of your Hearts, what do you think to do at last? Where will you appear? Do you expect that Christ should take you to himself, Dying in your Redemption against him, or that He should save you in your Sins? How unreasonable is this? **Repent, O Sinners! And Return in Time.** (And let those who have begun Well, hold on still, lest they lose their Reward, The Day of our Redemption draweth near. Therefore let us cast off the Works of Darkness; let us keep down Sin, which Christ came to destroy. Let us Renounce our own Lusts and Wills, and Live as his Covenant Servants; and then blessed shall we be.

